

# *News from the Wyoming Department of Health*

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

## **Department: Fight Diabetes by Tracking “ABCs”** November is National Diabetes Month

With diabetes rates rising in the state, the Wyoming Department of Health is asking residents to know their “ABCs” as they relate to diabetes and health.

Related to diabetes, A stands for A1c, a blood glucose test; B stands for blood pressure; and C stands for cholesterol.

Diabetes results when the body cannot produce enough insulin to transport sugar from the blood to body cells, which results in high blood sugar. This high blood sugar, or glucose, affects other organs and systems in the body and results in severe and potentially life-threatening complications, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, lower-extremity amputations, neuropathy (impaired sensation of pain in the feet or hands), end-stage kidney disease and blindness.

“Although there is currently no cure for diabetes, it is treatable,” said Dr. Brent Sherard, Wyoming Department of Health director and state health officer. “With lifestyle choices such as regular exercise and healthy food choices, oral medications and insulin options, there are more tools for effectively treating the disease than ever before.”

“That’s why we talk about the ‘ABCs.’ When A1c, blood pressure and cholesterol are monitored and controlled, the unwanted consequences of diabetes can be minimized and delayed,” Sherard said.

According to the Wyoming Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey for 2008, an estimated 7.4 percent of the Wyoming adults have been told by a doctor they have diabetes. This represents approximately 30,000 people.

“Unfortunately, the prevalence of diabetes in Wyoming has more than doubled over the last 10 years or so,” Sherard said. In 1997, the percentage of adults with diagnosed diabetes was estimated at 3 percent by the BRFSS survey.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) estimates about one-third of people with diabetes have not yet been diagnosed. As a result, the percentage of adults in Wyoming with diabetes is likely closer to 10 percent.

The Wyoming Department of Health’s Diabetes Prevention and Control Program offers a website that can help Wyoming residents find reliable diabetes resources and information by county at <http://www.health.wyo.gov/phsd/diabetes>.

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